



Cowlitz Chaplaincy

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*A non-profit organization serving Emergency Service Responders
and Citizens since 1983*

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December and January were very interesting months with a variety of events. In addition, we were visited with some cold weather and snow. So I guess we can say we had a winter this year.

Chaplain Steve announced that he is retiring February 29th which will bring an end to his 10 years of service with the Chaplaincy. He has certainly been a tremendous asset to our outreach in the county. Through these past ten years Steve has touched so many people within our county and built he has built relationships with our law enforcement, fire personnel, and emergency personnel. His departure will certainly be felt. I am very thankful for him and his wife Carmen. They have served us well. Thank you, Steve for your friendship. Miriam and I pray that God will guide you and give you many more years to enjoy your family especially your grand kids. May the highways and byways bring pleasure and opportunities to you and Carmen.

PARTY TIME

**You are invited to an Open House for Steve White.
Feb. 25, 2012; 5-9 p.m.
Calvary Community Church
2655 38th Avenue; Longview**

HELP!!

We at the Chaplaincy really need your prayers and support. You can imagine the challenges that are ahead of us. We need God to direct a new person to come and fill the void left by Steve's retirement. We have "feelers" out and are anticipating responses to our announcement of a vacancy. Pray that God will send the right person for our community.

Second, we have our **Les Nelson Memorial Chaplaincy Breakfast and Auction Fundraiser** coming upon us. This takes lots of work to put together and we need help. During our last Board Meeting we decided it would be very helpful if we could locate a few people who would like to become part of an auxiliary of the Chaplaincy in giving help in making our fundraising effort more successful and exciting.

We know that God has wonderful talent within our community that would make our chaplaincy blossom even more than it is. You can contact me or any of the board members. Their phone numbers are on our Website:

www.cowlitzchaplaincy.org
My phone no. # 360-431-7699.

Another way you can help is to be a Table Captain to help fill the tables for the breakfast. To date we have 8 people who have committed to be Table Captains. **We need 32 more.** The breakfast is free and the tables hold eight people. If you would be able to help us in this need please contact me at the above phone number. We are also **collecting items** to be auctioned. If you would like to donate an item or items please contact the Chaplaincy.

As you can see it is a consuming adventure to make a fundraiser successful and we need your help. You have been so faithful throughout the twenty-nine years of the Chaplaincy. It has been because of you and our Lord that we have been able to survive throughout the years. Your prayers and financial support have been the life blood for our longevity and success within our scope of service to our community. It seems so trite just to say thank you. Please hear my heart and know we are most grateful for each of you.

HOLIDAY HEARTBREAK

We were not exempt to calls for help and comfort during the holidays. We responded to calls from those who found the holidays not so happy and unplanned moments that change their lives forever. I was called to one family that made me realize once again just how precious life is.

My phone rang about 9:30 p.m. The night was cloudy and normal January evening, the Communication Center called to tell me that an elderly lady was down and CPR was in progress, then gave me the address. I arrived in about ten minutes to find the fire trucks and EMTS already there doing all of the first aid that was possible. I was with the husband of the lady.

The couple had been married for 57 years. The house was very neat and clean and had many family treasures on shelves though out the living room and dining room. I was impressed by the neatness of their home. The elderly gentleman was very distraught. His lover and life-long mate was being handled by strangers who were trying with all their sincere ability and compassion to resuscitate her.

I held the old gentleman's hand as he was trying to keep his

composure yet he kept uttering the phrase over and over again: "*What will I do without her. She is my life, we've been together forever.*" It wasn't but a few moments later that the Fireman called for me to come to him. The look on his face told me the sad news. I knew that they were unsuccessful in establishing a heartbeat and they were instructed by the hospital to "call the scene," which meant there was no more they could do. The lady stepped into eternity.

I returned to my charge, the elderly gentleman to inform him that his childhood sweetheart, his long-time friend and wife had not responded and had passed away. Tears rushed down his cheeks. Even with his house full of strangers the grief was too much to bear. Not saying a word, I just held a broken, hurt gentleman in my arms and let him cry.

After the Fireman and EMTS left, leaving me and a police officer to wait for the Coroner and funeral home to come to finalize this call. The elderly gentleman asked if he could go to his wife for a couple of moments and we granted him this important time. I followed closely to him and as he knelt down. He gently took her hand and a soft tender voice said; "*Farewell my sweet love. I will see you again in*

the not the too far future. Farewell; I love you."

I don't want this to just be another call that I am privileged to go on to bring support and help, but that it would remind me that life is a precious gift from God and each moment is to be cherished. Yes, I saw the hurt and pain; the uncertainty of the future at that moment when a loved one dies.

Folks, this is what the Chaplaincy is all about and your partnership is so important for us to be ready for that next call. Please pray for us that God will keep us fresh and that we will be true to His anointing to bring His presence into the lives of those who are hurting. Your prayers and financial help are so important to the on-going success of the Cowlitz Chaplaincy. Remember, if you can help or know somebody that can help us in our fundraising efforts let us know.

Chaplain Lyle

COMING MAY 12

**THE ANNUAL
LES NELSON FUNDRAISING
BREAKFAST AND AUCTION.**

**WE CAN USE TABLE
CAPTAINS. IF YOU WOULD
LIKE TO HELP WITH THIS,
PLEASE CALL THE
CHAPLAINCY NOW.**

Just Some Thoughts...

It's Time... some of you have already heard the news about my retirement. For those who have not, I 'officially' retire from this ministry on February 29, 2012. This is not a decision that Carmen and I came to easily nor quickly. For the past couple years God and I have been "talking" about the subject and He has made it clear that "it's time."



LPD Chief Duscha presents 2011 "Volunteer of the Year" Award to Chaplain Steve

My career as Chaplain began on March 1, 2002 when Sgt (now Fairview, OR Chief) Ken Johnson asked if I wanted to be the Chaplain for Longview PD. At the time he had no idea that I had been considering L/E Chaplaincy for many years. The story is too long for here, but it began when I came back from Vietnam and planned on a L/E career – then God 'got a hold of me' and redirected my path toward ministry.' My best friend at the time (King CSO Dep Bruce Morrison) joked, "Who knows, maybe someday you'll be our Chaplain." With pastoral stops in Sedro Wooley, Monroe and Centralia along the way I was asked by their Chief's to be their Chaplains. Each time God moved me to another church. Then came Kelso-LV and the door opened wide for me to fulfill the 'desires of my heart' (see Psalm 37:4).

What that open door led to was the 10-year "ride" of my life. During these years I have been invited to walk alongside people

in some of the most tragic and scariest moments in their lives – for that I am honored and privileged. I cannot begin to express how thankful I am to all of you who made that "ride" possible – from the Chaplaincy Board, to Police/Fire Chiefs and Sheriffs, to the men and women

who put their lives on the line each and every day, to our dispatchers and records folks and Coroners and secretaries

of all the departments I've worked with – I am so

blessed to have worked with you!! And of course without the prayers and financial support of many others I would not have "been there" when the need came. How do I thank you for your faithful prayers and financial support of my work? Saying "**THANKS**" seems way too trite, but I am deeply thankful for each of you!! A great big "**THANKS**" to local pastors/ churches -- especially my pastor (Jeff Hoover) and Evangel Christian Fellowship for your support and encouragement. Finally, "**THANKS**" to Lyle and our volunteer Chaplains who worked alongside me throughout these years.

Many have asked, "What now?" In all honesty I don't have a clear answer for you. I do know this – God was not caught 'off guard' or surprised by all this – He has a plan for my future I am sure. In the same way I had to 'discover' His plans for me as a Chaplain I

now have to 'discover' His plans for the rest of my "ride" through life. I just pray it doesn't take me 30 years to figure out this time! (FYI: I will be at this year's fundraiser breakfast in May – hope to cya there!)

The only regret I have is that I will not be able to take my last patrol car ride with "*the Colonel*" (LPD's Kevin Merry). Kevin died in 2009. He was the first LPD Officer I rode with 10 years ago – he drew the short straw in briefing! Since then I've spent thousands of hours hanging out with cops & firefighters & support staff. I am honored to be a part of their 'families' and will miss those encounters immensely. One thing I (and Carmen) won't miss is the 3:00am phone calls! So I wonder who will 'draw the short straw' on my last day???

Just because I'm retiring doesn't mean that Cowlitz Chaplaincy does not need your support. I believe the best days for the Chaplaincy are ahead and ask that you pray for our Board as they look for my replacement and plan the future of this vital ministry. Finally, if I have done some good these past 10 years, please honor that by continuing your prayers and financial support of the Chaplaincy – they cannot "be there" without YOU!. Shalom!

Chap Steve

[PS: Carmen, I love you and thanks for being my partner on this ride! You deserve a medal!!!]

